

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name CASTLERUN HISTORIC DISTRICT

other names/site number 83-1517 5017

Location

street & number Route 682 not for publication N/A
city or town Castlewood vicinity X
state Virginia code VA county Russell code 019 Zip 24224

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

McCart Signature of certifying official

Date

12/15/99

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is: other (explain):

 entered in the National Register

 See continuation sheet.

 determined eligible for the

National Register

 See continuation sheet.

 determined not eligible for the National Register

 removed from the National Register

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification**Ownership of Property** (Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
☒ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u> 3 </u>	<u> 1 </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u> 3 </u>	<u> 1 </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A**6. Function or Use****Historic Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: EDUCATION	Sub: SCHOOLHOUSE
RELIGION	RELIGIOUS FACILITY

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: EDUCATION	Sub: VACANT/NOT IN USE
RELIGION	RELIGIOUS FACILITY

7. Description**Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER _____

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: WOOD (LOG) _____

Roof: METAL _____

Walls: WOOD (WEATHERBOARD); SYNTHETICS (VINYL)

other _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION
EDUCATION

Period of Significance ca. 1895-1949

Significant Dates ca. 1895
1924

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A _____

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder _____

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceCastlerun Historic District
Russell County

- ☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Name of repository: VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

10. Geographical DataAcreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

1 17/382820/4078930

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Anne Stuart Beckett, Architectural Historian

Organization: Virginia Department of Historic Resources/Roanoke Regional Preservation Office

date: August 31, 1999

street & number: 1030 Penmar Ave, SE

telephone (540) 857-7586

city or town Roanoke state VA

zip code 24013

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**Castle Run Historic District
Russell County**

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Narrative Description

Summary Description and Integrity Statement:

The Castlerun Historic District in Russell County exhibits two contributing primary buildings and two outbuildings, one contributing and one noncontributing. The ca. 1895 Castlerun School and the 1924 Castle Run Missionary Baptist Church have served the spiritual, educational, and social needs of this isolated far southwest Virginia community. Both buildings are visually linked as they stand between the fork of Castle Run Creek where Route 682 curves to the south. The narrow, winding State Route 682 runs two miles through the rural community of Castlerun, composed of small-scale corn and tobacco farms amid forested hillsides (Exhibits A & B). The church and the school are of similar frame construction; both are tall rectangular one-room buildings with steep roofs and gable front façades resting on vertical wood piers. Wood stoves once heated the buildings and tall sash-windows line each side elevation. A contributing ca. 1926 frame privy is situated below the school near Castle Run Creek and a noncontributing, concrete-block bathroom was recently built at the rear of the school. Castlerun School has had few alterations, remains essentially unchanged, and is the most intact one-room schoolhouse of the three remaining in Russell County. The school closed in 1951 when a new bus route took the children to a 12-room elementary school in nearby Castlewood. The church was updated in the 1950s with vinyl siding and interior paneling, but still serves this small mountainous community along the hollows of Castle Run Creek.

Exterior and Interior:

Castlerun School was built ca. 1895 and remains essentially unchanged. Log piers, hewn beams, and planed (not milled) floor joists support the school, which is covered in its original 3/8"x 5" wide weatherboard with cornerboards and wire nails. Milled studs are spaced 1'-6" on center. The steeply pitched gable roof is accented with exposed rafter ends. A historic photo of the school taken ca. 1902 depicts wood shingles covering the gable roof (Exhibit C). Oral tradition states that when a new teacher started in 1926, she began upgrading the school, which included replacing the wood shingles with the current standing-seam metal and probably adding the privy. Architectural evidence supports this claim.¹

A modern wooden deck was added to the school's front entrance overlooking Castle Run Creek.

¹ Vergie Hurd, personal communication, 1999.

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Description (continued)

One-over-one wood sash windows taken from the church light the interior of the 20'x30' one-room schoolhouse. Simple, butt-lapped 4" boards trim the door and windows. The wood, six-panel front door enters into the open one-room schoolhouse. A tongue-and-groove floor was recently installed, while the original 2"-wide beaded wood siding remains on the walls. Plywood boards cover the beaded siding remaining on the 12'-6" high ceiling. The original bell tower shown in the ca. 1902 photo has been removed.

The original ca. 1926 frame privy (4'-8" x 4'-2") still stands to the rear and below the school along Castle Run Creek. This vertical clad, shed roof privy is typical in design and construction to others remaining around the Southwest Virginia countryside. A small, noncontributing, one-story, two-room, concrete block bathroom (12'-2" x 6'-8") was recently built at the rear of the school.

Castle Run Missionary Baptist Church was built upon a rock outcropping on the east side of Route 682 facing the schoolhouse. The church was built in essentially the same manner as the school with log piers, frame construction, three windows piercing the side elevations, and a gable front entrance. Standing seam metal also clads this steeply pitched roof. A poured concrete landing and steps were added to the front entrance. Exterior modifications include the addition of vinyl siding over the original weatherboard and new vinyl-clad one-over-one sash windows. Interior changes include new carpeting, new metal six-panel, double-leaf front doors, new pews, and the application of vertical wood paneling over the walls. The ceiling was dropped to 10'-10" with acoustical tile. Two Sunday school rooms were extended off the rear elevation. A coal-stove once heated the 21'-6" x 33'-6" one-room church and oil lamps once lit it. The church continues to serve this rural southwestern community.

Landscape Features

The school was strategically built in the fork of Castle Run Creek and faces the south side of Route 682, where it turns south at the foot of Castlerun Hollow through forested hillsides. The church faces the school from a rock outcropping. This tiny historic district is the core of the Castlerun community that stretches for two miles along Route 682 amid small-scale farms and woods in the foothills of Clinch Mountain. The historic district is situated five miles south below St. Paul, a small, turn-of-the-century town straddling the meandering Clinch River on the Wise County side. Cutting through southwest Virginia, the Clinch River is the dividing line between the coal-mining area to the north,

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Description (continued)

where the valleys are narrow and the mountains steep, and the agricultural and cattle region to the south, where the valleys are broad and rolling. The early town of Castlewood, located six miles northeast on the Clinch River, once served this area and also provided housing to coal miners. But when the modern north/south Alternate Route 58 came through Russell County and southwest Virginia only three miles from Castlerun, the town's businesses relocated to the highway, thus abandoning "old Castlewood" and creating "new Castlewood" (see Exhibit A). The region is also served by the Norfolk and Western (N&W) Railroad, which follows the Clinch River northwest to southeast, bringing out coal from the adjoining mountainous counties of Scott, Wise, Buchanan, Dickenson, and Lee.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

The ca. 1895 Castlerun School and 1924 Castle Run Missionary Baptist Church of the Castlerun Historic District capture the essence of the rugged mountainous community of Castlerun in Russell County in southwest Virginia. The community spans two miles along the narrow winding Route 682 and Castle Run Creek three miles west of Castlewood and five miles south of St. Paul, a coal-mining town straddling the Clinch River in Wise County. In October 1882, James H. Dickenson deeded land to the Castlewood School District "for free School purposes." The weatherboarded frame, one-room school was heated by wood, lighted by gas, with water retrieved from the creek. About thirty students of seven grades attended the school with one schoolteacher for five months out of the year. Of the 48 one-room schools that existed in Russell County in 1928, only three survive today, with Castlerun being the most intact. Castlerun School closed in 1951 when the new bus route took children to a 12-room elementary school in Castlewood. In 1923, Earnest Dale deeded land for Castle Run Missionary Baptist Church, which was built a year later upon a rock outcropping facing the school on the east side of Route 682. The church resembles the school with its tall rectangular frame construction, sash windows on the side elevations, and a gable front entrance. The church's first minister, Brother Roy Redding, conducted monthly worship services for 20-30 parishioners from the time the church opened until his death in the 1980s. Daily "prayer meetings" were also held for the whole community, farmers and schoolchildren alike. The vernacular church and schoolhouse at the hollow of Castle Run Creek are the epitome of early twentieth-century public buildings that represent a way of life that is vanishing in our ever-changing rural landscapes.

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Justification of Criteria

The Castlerun Historic District is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its contribution to education and religion, and under Criterion C for its unique vernacular architectural style. The Castlerun Historic District contributes to our understanding of the isolation and hardships endured by the coal miners and farmers in the rugged, rural terrain of far southwest Virginia.

Acknowledgments

The author would like to acknowledge Vergie Hurd and the other residents of Castlerun for their dedication to preserving their rural heritage and historic buildings; and Dr. John R. Kern of the Roanoke Regional Preservation Office for his review and comments.

Historical Background

Hardship was a way of life for many in this area of the Alleghany Mountains, which includes Scott, Lee, Dickenson, Buchanan, and Wise counties. When Castlerun School opened ca. 1895, attending school was not mandatory, nor well regulated. Many in the community were poor, and "scraping by." The population of Russell County in 1890 was 14,909 whites and 1,217 colored. Corn, wheat, oats, rye, and tobacco were the main crops, and cattle and sheep were raised in this 497-square-mile county. In 1897, the population of the county seat of Lebanon was 250 people and the Clinch Valley Division of the Norfolk & Western (N&W) Railroad ran east to west through the county bringing out iron ore and coal. Historically, the town of Castlewood served the community of Castlerun and the surrounding area, from its location six miles to the northeast on the Clinch River and the N&W railroad. Castlewood provided lodging for single coal miners, and by 1917 it boasted a population of 300 citizens with six general stores, three grocery stores, two hardware stores, two mills, two hotels, two saddlerys, and two physicians. Today, the town stands abandoned as the new Castlewood community moved closer to Alternate Route 58.²

Traditionally, many residents in Castlerun traveled to work in the coal mines of Dickenson and Wise counties, grew and canned their own vegetables, and farmed small-scale corn and tobacco farms without the convenience of modern machinery, relying instead on animal labor.

² Chataigne's Virginia Gazetteer 1893-94; Virginia State Directory 1897 & 1917.

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Statement of Significance (continued)

Lifelong resident of Castlerun and local preservationist Ms. Vergie Hurd described how life was growing up in Castlerun Hollow. Born and raised in a log house just above the district, she described how her family never owned a car, they grew and canned their food, and that her father left at 5:00 in the morning to walk six miles to work in the Clinch River Quarry (now closed). Returning late from work, she explained how her father picked up any needed groceries at the company store and carried them back up winding Route 682; she could never get to sleep until she saw him arrive home. Ms. Hurd also stated how Walter Mead's Grocery Store and Mill and Floyd Jesse's Country Store once served this isolated community. Mead's Store still stands a mile above the historic district, although the mill is gone, and Jesse's Store stands vacant 3/10 of a mile above the district. Ms. Hurd exclaimed that Mead's was the place to go for groceries, but Jesse's was the place for candy and popsicles.

Castlerun Schoolhouse

In October 1882, James H. Dickenson deeded land to the Castlewood School District "for free School purposes." The school was reportedly opened in 1895. In 1900, Mr. Dickenson also deeded land for Buckeye School, another one-room school in Russell County. Buckeye was situated off the north/south Route 19 in the hamlet of Hansonville just north of Clinch Mountain and 15 miles south of Castlerun. Castlerun School probably functioned much like Buckeye School, since both buildings were constructed as simple weatherboarded frame structures with windows on both side elevations; both were heated by wood and lighted by gas. The ceilings were high and the interior paneled with tongue-and-groove strips. There was no indoor plumbing, and the boys retrieved water from the creek and the girls washed the blackboard and swept up. Buckeye was upgraded to coal heating in 1925, while the number of students still ranged from six to 30. The teachers were allowed ample discipline, and switching the behind and whacking the hand were common punishments. Only the large Buckeye tree in the yard for which the school was named remains of the school today.³

In 1958, the *Roanoke Times* reported on a Russell County school contract that was found in a "old chest, preserved in an isolated farmhouse in ... Russell County." The 1884 contract was between B.F. Bundy, chairman of the Russell County School Board, and J.E. Fogleman. Fogleman was to receive the "princely" sum of \$20.00 per month to teach school for the five-month school year from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily. (It was not until 1938-39 that Governor Perry enacted the 180-day school year into

³ Russell County deed; Cook, Buckeye (One Room School in Russell County).

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Statement of Significance (continued)

Law). Part of the contract reads "That the fire shall be made or caused to be made, and the floor should be swept or caused to be swept" by the said Fogleman. A manuscript speech that was also found in the chest illuminates the Victorian era of 1884 by stating that

the sexes should be educated separately and if one or the other should be educated the best, it should be the men.... The unavoidable association of the sexes will beget a friendliness that does not inspire studious habits. It is impossible for us to study books as we ought and at the same time have our hearts and heads engaged in studying the other sex.

Fogleman earned his teacher's certificate after taking an examination given by local school superintendent M.C. Clark, and taught school in a cove in Elk Garden.

When Public Education began in Virginia in 1870-71, there were 38 "crude" schools in Russell County. By 1889, Russell County had two brick schools, 33 frame schools, 51 log schools, and a total of six outhouses. Poor attendance was common and caused excessive failure rates. In 1884-85, the 76 white schools had a student body of 3,420 and the five black schools had 166 students. Out of this potential enrollment, only 1,940 white students and 119 black students attended school. In 1900, about one out of eight rural white persons was illiterate and many read so poorly as to be virtually illiterate; by 1950, 61 percent had only completed the seventh grade or less.⁴

Early schools exhibited poor and irregular attendance; high failures and dropout rates by many students in some schools was 50 percent. It is most likely that in arithmetic, spelling, and reading there was a large difference in the ages of the children doing the same class activity because of the teacher-pupil ratio. While Castlerun held about 30 children, some teachers had as many as 70 pupils, and classrooms of 40-50 pupils were common. Of the 89 different schools in Russell County in 1928, 43, or about half, were one-room schools. As with Castlerun School, children were probably grouped according to ability and there was a wide range of ages. The tall, rectangular one-room Castlerun School held seven grades administered by one schoolteacher.⁵

⁴ Givens, The Study of Secondary Education in Russell County;

⁵ Pratt, Russell County, Virginia's Bluegrass Empire; The Heritage of Russell County.

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Statement of Significance (continued)

Of the numerous one-room schools that served Russell County, only three survive today, with Castlerun the most intact and the earliest of the three. Of the other two schools, one has been converted into another use, and the other stands in ruins covered by vegetation. Castlerun School served as the social and educational center of the community until it closed in 1951, when a new bus route along Route 682 took the children to the 12-room Temple Hill Elementary School three miles northeast to "new Castlewood." Some children suffered from this traumatic event. One of them, Ms. Hurd, described how the change from walking down from her home in Castlerun Hollow to the one-room schoolhouse to then having to board a large yellow school bus that she had never seen before and drive to a new school "terrorized" her.

Castle Run Missionary Baptist Church

In 1923, Earnest Dale deeded one-fourth of an acre "for the purpose of building a Missionary Baptist Church" on Castle Run Creek. Dale deeded the land to the trustees of the church, N. T. Jesse, H.P. Meade, and W.F. Dale. All three men were an important part of the community. Jesse was related to the owner of Jesse's Grocery Store up Route 682, and both Jesse and Meade were part of large local families that are attributed to road names and local cemeteries. And Dale was the father of Earnest Dale. It was agreed in the deed "that the following denomination in good standing and licensed can Preach in the House when the Missionary Babtist (sic) is not using (sic) the House. It is further agreed that this House can only be used for Religious services." Fund-raising dinners that were held in the Castlerun School supported the construction of the church, and when the church opened the following year, it was debt free. The church is a tall rectangular building with a centered gable front facing the school across Route 682 from a rock outcropping.⁶

Because of continued isolation, the church and the school were the only anchors for this rural community. Many of these rural families held firmly to age-old superstitions and traditions. Of such attitudes, extreme individualism, conservatism, and fatalism were perhaps of most significance and are partly traced to religious beliefs and practices. In 1900, most rural Virginia families, such as those in Castlerun, lived in physical and cultural isolation; travel was slow, usually less than five miles per hour; there were no telephones, automobiles, movies, radios, or television. The majorities of rural churches were weak organizations with poor physical facilities and poorly trained part-time ministers. Preaching services were held once or twice a month. The advent of the automobile, good

⁶ Russell County deed; Hurd, personal communication, 1999.

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Statement of Significance (continued)

roads, radio, and television began to ease some of the rural isolation. Although farmers now gave more money to the church, the better transportation and communication also brought new competitions that drew people away from the church. But for the isolated communities, such as Castlerun, the church often stayed the focus of the community.⁷

Before the Castle Run Missionary Baptist Church opened, church services were held in the Castlerun Schoolhouse. When the church finally opened in 1924, its first minister proved to be its longest. Brother (Roy) Redding was employed by the American Sunday School Union and traveled about 50 miles from Marion in Smyth County from the mid-1920s until his death in the early 1980s. Brother Redding never retired from preaching and conducted monthly services for at least 30 people from 10:00 until 1:00. Brother Redding also conducted the annual Sunday school class, which was so popular that it was not uncommon to have at least 50 parishioners, children and adults alike. Ms. Hurd said that a daily "prayer meeting" was also held which the whole community attended; farmers left their fields and the children were let out of school to partake in the 11:00 meeting, which lasted an hour, usually more. After Brother Redding's death, Brother (Larry) Smith took over for a short time and the current Brother (Doyle) Hobbs is now in his second year of conducting weekly Sunday services for 12-30 people from all denominations. Because of the steep topography, the church has never had a cemetery, and aside from small family cemeteries dotting the hollows, the Castlerun community uses the large Temple Hill cemetery in Castlewood.⁸

The Castle Run Missionary Baptist Church continues to serve as an anchor to this small, rural community living along the hollows of Castle Run Creek; and since 1986, Ms. Hurd has organized the annual Castlerun School reunion.

⁷ Garnett, The Virginia Rural Church and related influences 1900-1950.

⁸ Hurd, personal communication, 1999.

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**Castle Run Historic District
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Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated historic district consisting of two parcels (School = 368 and Church = 346A on the Russell County aerial tax maps) comprises less than one acre and is portrayed on the accompanying 1:125-scale map (Exhibit A).

Boundary Justification

The nominated historic district consisting of two parcels encompasses the two historic primary resources and two secondary resources

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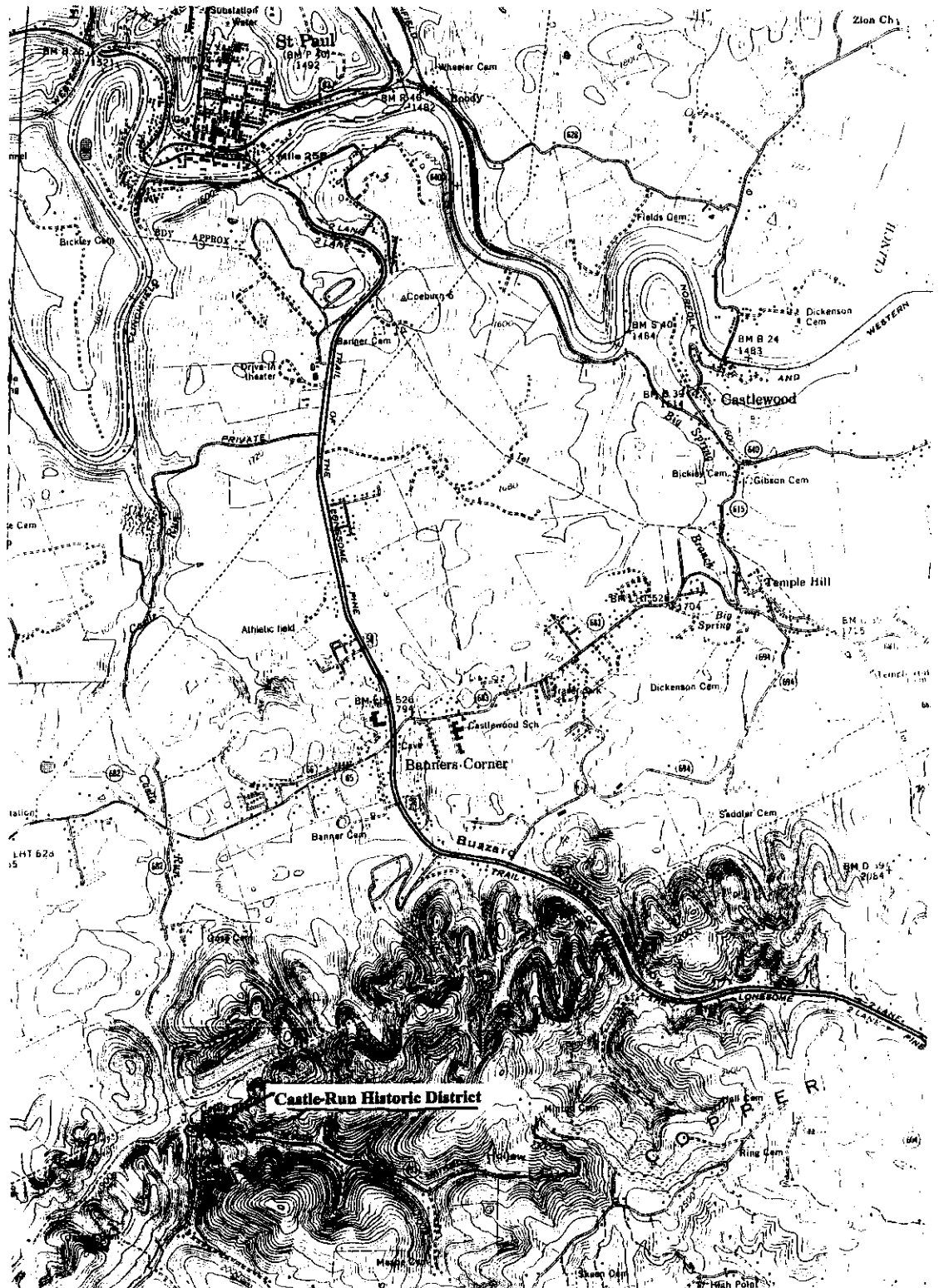


Exhibit A: Location map of the Castlerun community in relationship to the towns of St. Paul and Castlewood on the Clinch River (U.S. Geological Survey [USGS] St. Paul and Moll Creek 7.5-minute topographic quadrangles 1978).